

Thomas's Burlesque Dramas.

BOMBASTES FURIOSO:

A Burlesque Tragic Opera,

BY

WILLIAM BARNES RHODES.

CHEAP EDITION.

LONDON:

JOSEPH THOMAS, FINCH LANE, CORNHILL;

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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AND SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT.

MDCCCXLVI.

Dramatis Personæ, Costume, and Stage Directions.

ARTAXOMINOUS, *King of Utopia*.—Full dress, court suit, powdered wig.....Mr. MATHEWS.

FUSBOS, *Minister of State*.—The same.Mr. TAYLOR.

GENERAL BOMBASTES.—A general's military suit, Jack boots, comic powdered wig and pigtail, sword and sash, general's hat and plumeMr. LISTON.

Attendants or Courtiers.—Full dress court suits.

Army.—A long drummer, a short fifer, and two (sometimes three) soldiers of different dimensions, all dressed in caricature.

DISTAFFINA.—Coloured chintz gown open in front, crimson calimanco petticoat, white muslin apron, mob cap, white muslin handkerchief..... Mrs. LISTON

R. means *Right*.—*L.* *Left*.—*C.* *Centre*.

Time of representation forty minutes.

BOMBASTES FURIOSO.

SCENE I.—*Interior of the Palace.*

ARTAXOMINOUS *in his Chair of State; a Table set out with Bowls, Glasses, Pipes, &c.; Attendants on each side.*

TRIO.—*Tekeli.*

1st ATT. What will your Majesty please to wear?
Or blue, green, red, black, white, or brown?

2d ATT. D'ye choose to look at the bill of fare?

ARTAX. Get out of my sight, or I'll knock you down.

2d ATT. Here is soup, fish, or goose, or duck, or fowl, or pigeons, pig, or hare?

1st ATT. Or blue, or green, or red, or black, or white, or brown.

What will your Majesty, &c.

ARTAX. Get out of my sight, &c.

[*Exeunt Attendants. R. & L.*

L. Enter FUSBOS, and kneels to the King.

FUS. Hail, Artaxominous! ycleped the Great!
I come, an humble pillar of thy state,
Pregnant with news—but ere that news I tell,
First let me hope your Majesty is well,

ART. Rise, learned Fusbos! rise, my friend,
know

We are but middling—that is, but *so so*.

FUS. Only *so so*! O monstrous, doleful thing
Is it ~~the~~ mulligrubs affects the king?

Or, dropping poisons in the cup of joy,
Do the blue devils your repose annoy?

ART. Nor mulligrubs, nor devils blue, are here;
But yet we feel ourself a little *queer*.

FUS. Yes, I perceive it in that vacant eye,
The vest unbutton'd, and the wig awry;
So sickly cats neglect their fur-attire,
And sit and mope beside the kitchen fire.

ART. Last night when undisturb'd by state affairs,
Moist'ning our clay, and puffing off our cares,
Oft the replenish'd goblet did we drain,
And drank and smok'd, and smok'd and drank again;
Such was the case, our very actions such,
Until at length we got a drop too much.

FUS. So when some donkey on the Blackheath
road
Falls, overpower'd, beneath his sandy load;
The driver's curse unheeded swells the air,
Since none can carry more than they can bear.

ART. The sapient Dr. Muggins came in haste;
Who suits his physic to his patients' taste;
He, knowing well on what our heart is set,
Hath just prescribed "to take a morning whet;"
The very sight each sick'ning pain subdues,
Then sit, my Fusbos, sit and tell thy news,

FUS. (*sits L. of table*) Gen'ral Bombastes, whose
resistless force
Alone exceeds by far a brewer's horse,
Returns victorious, bringing mines of wealth!

ART. Does he, by jingo! then we'll drink his
health. [*Drum and fife. R.*

FUS. But hark! with loud acclaim, the fife and
drum
Announce your army near; behold they come!
[*Drum and fife beat again. R.*

R. Enter BOMBASTES, attended by one Drummer, one Fifer, and two Soldiers, all very materially differing in size.

BOM. (*to Army*) Meet me this ev'ning at the Barley-Mow ;
I'll bring your pay, you see I'm busy now :
Begone, brave army, and don't kick up a row.

[*Exeunt Soldiers. R.*

(*to the King*) Thrash'd are your foes—this watch
and silken string,

Worn by their chief, I as a trophy bring ;
I knock'd him down, then snatched it from his fob ;
“ Watch, watch,” he cried, when I had done the job ;
“ My watch is gone,” says he—says I “ Just so ;
“ Stop where you are—watches were made to go.”

ART. For which we make you Duke of Strombelo.

[*BOMBASTES kneels; the King dubs him with a pipe, and then presents the bowl.*

From our own bowl here drink, my soldier true ;
And if you'd like to take a whiff or two,
He whose brave arm hath made our foes to crouch,
Shall have a pipe from this our royal pouch.

BOM. (*rises*) Honours so great have all my toils
repaid !

My Liege, and Fusbos, here's “ Success to trade.”

FUS. Well said Bombastes ! since thy mighty blows
Have given a quietus to our foes,
Now shall our farmers gather in their crops,
And busy tradesmen mind their crowded shops ;
The deadly havock of war's hatchet cease ;
Now shall we smoke the *calumet* of peace.

ART. I shall smoke short-cut, you smoke what
you please.

BOM. Whate'er your Majesty shall deign to name,
Short cut or long, to me is all the same.

BOM. & } In *short*, so *long* as we your favours
 FUS. } claim,

Short cut or *long* to us is all the same.

ART. Thanks, gen'rous friends! now list whilst I
 impart

How firm you're locked and bolted in my heart;
 So long as *this here* pouch a pipe contains,
 Or a full glass in *that there* bowl remains,
 To you an equal portion shall belong;
 This do I swear, and now—let's have a song.

FUS. My Liege shall be obey'd.

[*advances and attempts to sing.*

BOM.

Fusbos, give place,

You know you haven't got a singing face;
 Here, nature smiling, gave the winning grace.

SONG.—*Hope told a flattering tale.*

1. Hope told a flattering tale,

Much longer than my arm,

That love and pots of ale

In peace would keep me warm:

The flatt'rer is not gone,

She visits number one:

In love I'm monstrous deep,

Love! odsbobs, destroys my sleep,

2. Hope told a flattering tale,

Lest love should soon grow cool;

A tub thrown to a whale,

To make the fish a fool:

Should Distaffina frown,

Then love's gone out of town

And when love's dream is o'er

Then we wake and dream no more. [*Exit L.*

[*The King evinces strong emotions during the song
 and at the conclusion starts up.*

FUS. What ails my Leige? ah! why that look so sad?

ART. (*coming forward*) I am in love! I scorch, I freeze, I'm mad!

O tell me, Fusbos, first and best of friends,
You, who have wisdom at your fingers' ends,

Shall it be so, or shall it not be so?

Shall I my Griskinissa's charms forego,

Compel her to give up the regal chair,

And place the rosy Distaffina there!

In such a case what course can I pursue?

I love my Queen and Distaffina too.

FUS. And would a King his General supplant?

I can't advise, upon my soul I can't.

ART. So when two feasts whereat there's nought
to pay,

Fall unpropitious on the self-same day,

The anxious Cit each invitation views,

And ponders which to take or which refuse:

From *this* or *that* to keep away is loth,

And sighs to think he cannot dine at both. [*Exit L.*

FUS. So when some school-boy, on a rainy day,
Finds all his playmates will no longer stay,
He takes the hint himself—and walks away.

[*Exit R.*

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment in the Palace.*

L. Enter ARTAXOMINOUS.

ART. I'll seek the maid I love, though in my way,
A dozen gen'als stood in fierce array!
Such rosy beauties nature meant for kings;
Subjects have treat enough to see such things.

SONG.—*Paddy O'Carrol*.*

My love is so pretty,
 So lively and witty,
 None in town or in city

Her hand would disgrace!

My lord of the woolsack,
 His coachman would pull back,
 To get a look full smack

At her pretty face.

Mathematical teachers,
 Stiff methodist preachers,
 And all the gay creatures

That run about town.

Great foreign ambassadors,
 Never can pass her doors,
 But my sweet lass deplores

So much renown. Fal de ral, &c.

Though she drives a wheelbarrow,
 Through streets wide and narrow,
 The school-boys from Harrow

May laugh if they dare.

Nor tasteful Grassini,
 Nor Billingtonini,
 Divine Catalini

With her can compare.

Nor head with a'mitre,
 Nor Belcher the fighter
 Can find out a brighter

Than my pretty maid.

But words are mere play-things,
 Neat trim holiday-things,
 They cannot half say things

Enough for my love. Fal de ral, &c.

*This comic song was not written by the author of the piece.

She's young and she's tender,
 She's tall and she's slender,
 As straight as a fender

From the top to the toe.

Eyes like stars glittering,
 Mouth always titttering,
 Fingers to fit a ring

Ne'er were made so.

Her head like a holly-bow'r,
 Cheeks like a cauliflower,
 Nose like a jolly tower

By the sea-side.

Then haste, O ye days and nights,
 That I may taste delights,
 And with church holy rites

Make her my bride. Fal de ral, &c. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Inside of a Cottage.*

Enter DISTAFFINA.

DIS. This morn, as sleeping in my bed I lay,
 I dreamt, (and morning dreams come true, they say),
 I dreamt a cunning man my fortune told,
 And soon the pots and pans were turned to gold!
 Then I resolv'd to cut a mighty dash;
 But, lo! ere I could turn them into cash,
 Another cunning man my heart betray'd,
 Stole all away, and left my debts unpaid.

[*Enter Artaxominous. L.*

And pray, sir, who are you I'd wish to know?

ART. Perfection's self! O smooth that angry brow!
 For love of thee, I've wander'd thro' the town,
 And here have come to offer half-a-crown.

DIS. Fellow! your paltry offer I depise;
 The great Bombastes' love alone I prize.

ART. He's but a Gen'ral—damsel, I'm a King;

DIS. O Sir! that makes it quite another thing.

ART. And think not, maiden, I could e'er design
A sum so trifling for such charms as thine.
No! the half crown that ting'd thy cheeks with red,
And bade fierce anger o'er thy beauties spread,
Was meant that thou should'st share my throne and
bed.

DIS. (*aside*) My dream is out and I shall soon
behold

The pots and pans all turn to shining gold.

ART. (*puts his hat down to kneel on*) Here on my
knees (those knees which ne'er till now
To man or maid in suppliance bent) I vow
Still to remain, till you my hopes fulfil,
Fixt as the Monument on Fish-street-hill.

DIS. (*kneels*) And thus I swear, as I bestow my
hand
As long as e'er the Monument shall stand,
So long I'm your's——

ART. Are then my wishes crown'd

DIS. La! Sir, I'd not say no for twenty pound;
Let silly maids for love their favours yield,
Rich ones for me—a king against the field.

SONG.—*Paddy's Wedding.*

Queen Dido at
Her palace gate
Sat darning of her stocking O;
She sung and drew
The worsted through,
Whilst her foot was the cradle rocking O.
(For a babe she had
By a soldier lad,
Though hist'ry passes it over O;)

" You tell tale brat,
 " I've been a flat,
 " Your daddy has proved a rover O.
 " What a fool was I
 " To be cozen'd by
 " A fellow without a penny O ;
 " When rich ones came,
 " And ask'd the same,
 " For I'd offers from never so many O.
 " But I'll darn my hose,
 " Look out for beaus,
 " And quickly get a new lover O ;
 " Then come, lads, come,
 " Love beats the drum,
 " And a fig for Æneas the rover O."

ART. So Orpheus sung of old, or poets lie,
 And as the Brutes were charm'd, e'en so am I.
 Rosy cheek'd maid, henceforth my only queen,
 Full soon shalt thou in royal robes be seen ;
 And through my realm I'll issue this decree,
 None shall appear of taller growth than thee :
 Painters no other face pourtray—each sign
 O'er alehouse hung shall change its head for thine,
 Poets shall cancel their unpublish'd lays,
 And none presume to write but in thy praise.

[*Distaffina produces a bottle and glass. R.*

DIS. And may I then, without offending, crave
 My love to taste of this, the best I have.

ART. Were it the vilest liquor upon earth,
 Thy touch would render it of matchless worth ;
 Dear shall the gift be held that comes from you ;
 Best proof of love, (*drinks*) 'tis full proof Hodges
 too :
 Through all my veins I feel a genial glow,
 It fires my soul——

BOM. (*within. L.*) Ho, Distaffina, ho!

ART. Heard you that voice!

DIS. O yes, 'tis what's his name,
The General; send him packing as he came.

ART. And is it he? and doth he hither come?
Ah me! my guilty conscience strikes me dumb;
Where shall I go? say, whither shall I fly?
Hide me, oh hide me, from his injur'd eye!

DIS. Why, sure you're not alarm'd at such a thing!
He's but a General, and you're a King.

[*Artax. secrets himself in a closet. R. in flat.*
L. Enter BOMBASTES.

BOM. Lov'd Distaffina! now by my scars I vow,
Scars got—I hav'nt time to tell you how;
By all the risks my fearless heart hath run,
Risks of all shapes from bludgeon, sword, and gun,
Steel traps, the patrole, bailiff shrewd, and dun;
By the great bunch of laurels on my brow,
Ne'er did thy charms exceed their present glow!
O let me greet thee with one loving kiss—

[*sees the hat.*

Hell and the devil!—say whose hat is this?

DIS. Why help your silly brains, that's not a hat.

BOM. No hat?

DIS. Suppose it is, why what of that?
A hat can do no harm without a head!

BOM. Whoe'er it fits, this hour I doom him dead;
Alive from hence the caitiff shall not stir—

[*discovers the King.*

Your most obedient, humble servant, sir,

ART. O General, O!—

BOM. My much-loved master, O!
What means all this?

ART. Indeed I hardly know——

DIS. (*R.*) You hardly know!—a very pretty joke,

If kingly promises so soon are broke!
 Arn't I to be a Queen, and dress so fine?

ART. (*L.*) I do repent me of the foul design;
 To thee, my brave Bombastes, I restore
 Pure Distaffina, and will never more
 Through lane or street with lawless passion rove,
 But give to Griskinissa all my love.

BOM. (*C.*) No, no, I'll love no more; let him
 who can
 Fancy the maid who fancies ev'ry man:
 In some lone place I'll find a gloomy cave,
 There my own hands shall dig a spacious grave,
 Then all unseen I'll lay me down and die,
 Since woman's constancy is—all my eye.

TRIO.—*O Lady Fair!*

DIS. O cruel man! where are you going!

Sad are my wants, my rent is owing.

BOM. I go, I go, all comfort scorning;
 Some death I'll die before the morning.

DIS. Heigh O, Heigh O! sad is that warning;
 O do not die before the morning!

ART. I'll follow him, all danger scorning;
 He shall not die before the morning.

BOM. I go, I go, &c.

DIS. Heigh O, Heigh O! &c.

ART. I'll follow him, &c.

[*Exeunt. L.*

SCENE IV.—*A Wood.*

Enter FUSBOS.

FUS. This day is big with fate; just as I set
 My foot across the threshold, lo! I met
 A man whose squint terrific struck my view;
 Another came, and, lo! he squinted too:

And ere I'd reach'd the corner of the street,
 Some ten short paces, 'twas my lot to meet
 A third who squinted more—a fourth, and he
 Squinted more vilely than the other three.
 Such omens met the eye when Cæsar fell,
 But caution'd him in vain; and who can tell
 Whether those awful notices of fate
 Are meant for Kings, or Ministers of State?
 For rich, or poor, old, young, or short, or tall,
 The wrestler Love trips up the heels of all.

SONG.—*My Lodging is on the cold Ground.*

1. My lodging is in Leather-lane,
 A parlour that's next to the sky;
 'Tis exposed to the wind and the rain,
 But the wind and the rain I defy:
 Such love warms the coldest of spots,
 As I feel for Scrubinda the fair;
 O she lives by the scouring of pots,
 In Dyot-street, Bloomsbury-square.
2. O was I a quart, pint, or gill,
 To be scrubb'd by her delicate hands,
 Let others possess what they will
 Of learning, and houses, and lands;
 My parlour that's next to the sky
 I'd quit, her blest mansion to share;
 So happy to live and to die
 In Dyot-street, Bloomsbury-square.
3. And O would this damsel be mine,
 No other provision I'd seek;
 On a *look* I could breakfast and dine,
 And feast on a *smile* for a week.
 But, ah! should she false-hearted prove,
 Suspended, I'll dangle in air;
 A victim to delicate love,
 In Dyot-street, Bloomsbury-square. [*Exit. L.*]

Enter BOMBASTES, preceded by a Fifer, playing
"Michael Wiggins."*

BOM. Gentle musician, let thy dulcet strain
Proceed—play Michael Wiggins once again,—
Music's the food of love; give o'er, give o'er,
For I must batten on that food no more. [*Exit Fifer.*
My happiness is chang'd to doleful dumps,
Whilst, merry Michael all thy cards were trumps.
So, should some youth by fortune's blest decrees
Possess at least a pound of Cheshire cheese,
And bent some favour'd party to regale,
Lay in a kilderkin, or so, of ale;
Lo! angry fate, in one unlucky hour,
Some hungry rats may all the cheese devour,
And the loud thunder turn the liquor sour.

[Forms his sash into a noose.

Alas! alack! alack! and well-a-day,
That ever man should make himself away;
That ever man for woman false should die,
As many have, and so, and so—wont I;
No, I'll go mad! 'gainst all I'll vent my rage,
And with this wick'd wanton world a woful war I'll wage.

*[Hangs his boots to the arm of a tree, and taking
a scrap of paper, with a pencil writes the fol-
lowing couplet, which he attaches to them, re-
peating the words.*

"Who dares this pair of boots displace,
"Must meet Bombastes face to face."

Thus do I challenge all the human race,

[Draws his sword and retires up the stage.

L. Enter ARTAXOMINOUS.

ART. Scorning my proffer'd hand he frowning fled,
Curs'd the fair maid, and shook his angry head.

[Perceives the boots and label.

* The remainder of the part of Bombastes in this scene
is sometimes performed in a morning-gown and slippers.

“Who dares this pair of boots displace,

“Must meet Bombastes face to face.”

Ha! dost thou dare me, vile obnoxious elf;

I’ll make thy threats as *bootless* as thyself:

Where’er thou art, with speed prepare to go

Where I shall send thee—to the shades below!

[*Knocks down the boots.*

BOM. (*coming forward*) So have I heard on Afric’s
burning shore,

A hungry lion give a grievous roar;

The grievous roar echo’d along the shore.

ART. So have I heard on Afric’s burning shore

Another lion give a grievous roar,

And the first lion thought the last a boar.

BOM. Am I then mock’d? Now by my fame I swear

You shall soon have it—There? [*They fight.*

ART. Where?

BOM. There and there.

ART. I have it sure enough—Oh! I am slain,
I’d give a pot of beer to live again;

Yet, ere I die, I something have to say:

My once lov’d Gen’ral, prithee, come this way!

Oh! Oh! my Bom—— [*Falls on his back.*

BOM. bastes he would have said:

But ere the word was out his breath was fled.

Well, peace be with him, his untimely doom

Shall thus be mark’d upon his costly tomb:—

“Fate cropp’d him short—for be it understood,

“He would have liv’d much longer—if he could.”

[*Retires again up the stage*

Enter FUSBOS.

FUS. This was the way they came, and much I fear,
There’s mischief in the wind—what have we here?

King Artaxominous bereft of life?

Here’ll be a pretty tale to tell his wife.

BOM. A pretty tale, but not for thee to tell,
For thou shalt quickly follow him to hell;
There say I sent thee, and I hope he's well.

FUS. No, thou thyself shalt thy own message
bear;
Short is the journey, thou wilt soon be there.

[*They fight.*

DUETT.—*Weippert's Fancy.**

BOM. I'll quickly run you through,

FUS. No, hang me if you do,

I think I know a trick can equal two of that;

My sword I well can use,

So mind your P's and Q's :

BOM. I thank you, Sir, but I must caution you of
that.

(*Lord Cathcart's Favourite.*)

FUS. 'Tis a pleasure to fight

With a man so polite,

Then hear in return what I'll do, Sir;

I'll take down aught you'll say,

In the will-making way,

And be your Executor too, Sir.

BOM. O, Sir, there's no need

For so friendly a deed,

But I hope for yourself you're provided;

Since your worldly affairs

Will devolve to your heirs,

As soon as the point is decided,

Then come on while you can,

Meet your fate like a man—

Bombastes shall ne'er be derided.

BOM. O Fushos, Fushos, I am diddled quite,
Dark clouds come o'er my eyes, farewell, good
night!

* This duett is sometimes omitted.

Good night ! my mighty soul's inclin'd to roam,
So make my compliments to all at home.

[*Lies down by the King.*

FUS. And o'er thy grave a monument shall rise,
Where heroes yet unborn shall feast their eyes ;
And this short Epitaph that speaks thy fame,
Shall also there immortalize my name :—
“Here lies Bombastes stout of heart and limb,
“Who conquer'd all but Fusbos—Fusbos him.”

L. Enter DISTAFFINA.

DIS. Ah, wretched maid ! O miserable fate !
I've just arrived in time to be too late :
What now shall hapless Distaffina do ?
Curse on all morning dreams, they come so true.

FUS. Go, beauty, go, thou source of woe to man,
And get another lover where you can :
The crown now sits on Griskinissa's head ;
To her I'll go——

DIS. But are you sure they're dead ?

FUS. Yes, dead as herrings—herrings that are red.

FINALE.

DIS. Briny tears I'll shed,

ART. I for joy shall cry too :

FUS. Zounds ; the King's alive ;

BOM. Yes, and so am I too.

DIS. It was better far

ART. Thus to check all sorrow ;

FUS. But, if some folks please,

BOM. We'll die again to-morrow.

DIS. Tu ral, lu ral, la,

ART. Tu ral, lu ral, laddi ;

FUS. Tu ral, lu ral, la,

BOM. Tu ral, lu ral, laddi.

THE END.



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1055.

12, NORTHUMBERLAND ROAD,

LEAMINGTON SPA,

WARWICKSHIRE.

17/1/62.

Dear Major's Hall,

I have now confirmed what I mentioned last night—"Bombastes Furioso" was acted in the Arctic. A common practice was to get up plays to relieve the tedium of the long and dark winter, and costumes, at materials for making them, were at least sometimes taken from England. "Bombastes Furioso" was acted on January 9, 1857, on board H.M.S. "Assistance", one of several ships sent by the Admiralty in 1850 to seek the missing expedition commanded by Sir John Franklin. The female characters were always taken by the junior officers, and the part of Diabolina was taken by J. P. Cheyne, a midshipman in H.M.S. "Resolute". Another midshipman, C. R. Mackham, was Tubbab, and he, after leaving the Navy, ultimately rose to great fame as Sir Clements Mackham, a great geographer, President

